***Syllabus is Subject to Change***

**SOCI/ENST 367: Environmental Sociology**
Spring 2012
**Meeting time:** 10:50 AM- 12:05AM
**Location:** Sewall 309

**Instructor:** Dr. Robin Paige
**Email:** robin.paige@rice.edu
**Office:** 372 Sewall Hall
**Office Hours:** Tues & Thurs 2:30 – 4pm

*"Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. You are by accident of fate alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet."* – Carl Sagan

**Course Description:** This course takes a sociological approach to examine how humans affect the environment and the environment affects humans. We will explore questions probing the environment-society nexus: How does society define what constitutes "the environment?" Where are its boundaries, and in what ways do social groups shape that environment? And, reflexively, in what ways is society shaped by it? Who has differential access to environmental resources and why? Why and how are some members of society victims of environmental injustices? In addition to learning about the changing relationships between humans and the environment, this class aims to sharpen your critical/analytical thinking skills. In this course we will take the sociologist Peter Berger to heart when he wrote: "The first lesson of sociology is this – things are not what they seem."

**Required Books and Materials:** The following books are available at the campus store and most Internet booksellers (*be sure to get the correct edition if you buy on the Internet*).

- Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Park, L. S.-H., & Pellow, D. N. (2011). *The slums of Aspen : immigrants vs. the environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.
- Readings and films available on Owlspace

**Readings:** Readings are assigned to prepare you for the upcoming lectures and discussion section. It is your responsibility to do the assigned readings on your own **BEFORE** class so you are familiar with the topics and issues being discussed. All lectures and in-class activities will be based on the assumption that students have completed the readings assigned up to that date.

**Course Requirements: <u>**You must complete ALL of the following assignments to pass the class**</u>**

- **Midterm & Final Exam (40% of grade):** a midterm and final exam will be assigned that covers the course readings, films, and lecture material.

- **Group Project (40% of grade):** At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned to a small group of students (5-6 usually). You will work with this group of students over the semester on a group research paper, presentation and other activities. Further instructions will be distributed.

- **Forum Discussion Questions (10% of grade) –** You will submit discussion questions on the class readings and/or films for each class meeting. Your discussion question must be submitted on Owlspace no later 5pm the night before the next class meeting.

- **Class Participation (10% of grade)** – This class is highly interactive. Your regular attendance, preparation, and active participation in the course is required and expected.

**Grades for the course will be determined as follows:** I do not grade on a curve. I am happy to give everyone an A if everyone does A-quality work.

**The grading scale is as follows:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **A+ 99-100** | **C+ 77-79** |
| **A 93-98** | **C 74-76** |
| **A- 90-92** | **C- 70-73** |
| **B+ 88-89** | **D+ 67-69** |
| **B 84-87** | **D 64-66** |
| **B- 80-83** | **D- 60-63** |
| **F 59 and below** | |

**A range *Excellent work.*** Demonstrates superior ability to creatively and appropriately organize and express ideas, and provides a comprehensive and thoughtful response to all assigned questions.

**B range *Good work*.** Demonstrates good organization and expression of ideas, and provides a solid response to all assigned questions.

**C range *Fair work.*** Demonstrates moderate skill in organization and expression of ideas, and provides an acceptable response to all assigned questions.

**D-F range *Marginal to Unacceptable work.*** Demonstrates little to no clear ability to organize and express ideas in an understandable manner, and provides an incomplete response to some or all of the assigned questions.

**Statement on Special Needs:**
Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will need to also contact Disability Support Services in the Ley Student Center. If you have any temporary or long-term special needs (academic, physical, personal) please contact me during my office hours or after class. Do not wait till the last minute to inform me of a problem, as it will be more difficult personal situation occurs let me know as soon as possible. I am supportive and understanding of most situations (I respect your right to privacy, so details are not a requirement to find a way to work it out.)

**Policy on Due Dates and submission of assignments:** All assignments are due on the date/time specified on the assignment instructions. Assignments are required to be submitted in the manner outlined on the assignment instructions – no other submissions will be accepted unless mutually agreed upon ahead of time. For each calendar day an assignment/paper is late the student will lose one full letter grade from the grade assigned to the student's work. **No late assignments/papers will be accepted more than two days**

**past due date**. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of these dates. **Note: In class assignments will not be accepted late.**

**Student Responsibilities:**

- **Course Etiquette:** The success of a large class depends on everyone's cooperation. Actions such as arriving late, leaving class early, talking to friends, making/receiving phone calls, and surfing the web, checking email, or other non-course materials are disruptive, distracting, and unacceptable. Do not shuffle papers or pack up your things until I have dismissed the class – it is extremely rude and will not be tolerated. Students should let the instructor know if they are having difficulties reaching class on time or if they need to leave class early. ***All cell phones are to be turned off or put on vibrate during class.*** Course grades will be affected if students persist in disruptive activities without an explanation. Students will be asked to leave the classroom if their behavior disturbs others.
    - ***NOTE:*** *Students will be required to leave class under the following circumstances: Arriving late, talking on or texting on cell phones, sleeping, using laptops for purposes other than note taking, and/or doing homework for other classes.*

- **Attendance and Participation:** *"Eighty percent of success is showing up."* - *Woody Allen*
    - While attendance will not count for 80% of your grade, it will be difficult to be successful in this class without regular attendance and participation.
        - If you are absent it is your responsibility to keep up to date with course material and due dates. Please do not email me and ask me if you "missed something important" during your absence. As you can imagine, all of what I present in class is important to me.
    - This class requires a high level of interaction and engagement with me and your fellow students. Opinions and class debates are encouraged, but I ask that students provide well informed arguments preferably related to class materials (by doing this we avoid getting into debates based solely on emotion).As a participant in the course, you are expected to respect the ideas and opinions of others even if you do not agree with them. Some of the lectures, readings, and discussions in this class may challenge your own beliefs and ideas. Therefore, you should be prepared to have an open, engaged mind.

- **Academic Integrity:** You are responsible for your own work. If you are questioning whether you have documented or cited your sources properly, it is your responsibility to see me about these issues prior to submitting an assignment. If you find yourself thinking about submitting work that is not your own due to pressure, frustration, or any other reason, please talk with me. I am here to help you resolve these issues before they could negatively affect your academic career. Misrepresenting your work will not be tolerated in this class. Students are expected to exercise academic honesty and integrity. Violations such as cheating and plagiarism will result in an F for the assignment and further disciplinary action which may include recommendation for dismissal.
    - **Honor Code:** Students are expected to abide by the Rice Honor System (http://honor.rice.edu/). Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating on exams, having unauthorized possession of an exam, and submitting the work of another person as your own (aka, plagiarism). When in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask! Ignorance of this policy is not an acceptable excuse for noncompliance.

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**Week One: Introductions & What is Environmental Sociology**

*1/8 Tuesday: First class meeting*

*1/10 Thursday Readings:*

- Chapters 3 and 7 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- John Bellamy Foster. 1999. "Marx's theory of metabolic rift: Classical foundations for environmental sociology." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(2): 366---405. (Owlspace)

**Week Two: The Human-Environment Relationship**

*1/15 Tuesday Readings:*

Chapter 2

- Chapter 8 in Diamond, J. M. (2005). *Collapse : how societies choose to fail or succeed*. New York: Viking. (Owlspace)
- Chapter 2 and 8 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Owlspace)
- The Tragedy of the Commons by Garrett Hardin - The Garrett Hardin Society - Articles. (n.d.). Retrieved December 10, 2012, from http://www.garretthardinsociety.org/articles/art_tragedy_of_the_commons.html (Owlspace)

*1/17 Thursday Readings:*

- Chapter 5 in Davis, S. G. (1997). *Spectacular nature: corporate culture and the Sea World experience*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Owlspace)
- Woodgate, Graham "Animals and Us" in Redclift, M. R., & Woodgate, G. (2010). *The international handbook of environmental sociology*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar. (Owlspace)

**1/18 Friday: Field Trip to the Houston Zoo**

**Week Three: Measuring and Valuing Nature**

*1/22 Tuesday Readings:*

- Chapter 4 Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Chapter 1 "Nature and Space" in Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state : how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Owlspace)

*1/24 Thursday:*

- Chapter 10 "Your Economic Theory Makes No Sense" in Waring, M., & Waring, M. (1999). *Counting for nothing : what men value and what women are worth*. Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press. (Owlspace)
- McKinney, L. A. (2012). Entropic Disorder: New Frontiers in Environmental Sociology. *Sociological Perspectives*, *55*(2), 295–317. (Owlspace)
- Chapter 18 Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

**Week Four: Post-Industrial Economy and Resources**

*1/29 Tuesday Readings:* ***Group Presentation***

*1/31 Thursday Readings*:

- Magdoff, F., & Foster, J. B. (2010). What every environmentalist need to know about capitalism. *Monthly Review, 61*(10), 1–30. (Owlspace)
- Chapter 5 and 8 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

**Week Five: Ignorance is Bliss- Consumption and the Environment**

*2/5 Tuesday Readings:*

- Jorgenson, A. K., & Clark, B. (2009). The economy, military, and ecologically unequal exchange relationships in comparative perspective: A panel study of the ecological footprints of nations, 1975-2000. *Social Problems*, *56*(4), 621–646. (Owlspace)
- *Film: Grinding Nemo* (Owlspace)

*2/7 Thursday Readings:*

- Chapter 12 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Elizabeth Shove and Alan Warde, "Inconspicuous Consumption: The Sociology of Consumption, Lifestyles, and the Environment," (chapter 10) in *Sociological Theory and the Environment: Classical Foundations, Contemporary Insights*, by Riley Dunlap, Frederick H. Buttel, Peter Dickens and August Gijswijt (editors). Rowman & Littlefield, 2002. *(Owlspace)*

**Week Six: Selling Nature**

*2/12 Tuesday Readings:* ***Group Presentation***

*2/14 Thursday Readings:*

- Chapter 6 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Alma Guillermoprieto, Letter from Bolivia, "LETTER FROM BOLIVIA," The New Yorker, March 16, 1992, p. 95 ***(****Owlspace)*
- *The Damming of the Mekong: Major Blow to an Epic River* by Fred Pearce: Yale Environment 360. ***(****Owlspace)*

**Week Seven: Selling Nature**

*2/19 Tuesday Readings:*

- *Film: Tapped (in class)*
- Midterm Exam due on Owlspace (no class meeting)

*2/21 Thursday:* ***Group Presentation***

**Week Eight: 2/25-3/1 Spring Break**

**Week Nine: Population and Environmental Justice**

*3/5Tuesday Readings:*

- Chapter 9 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Park, L. S.-H., & Pellow, D. N. (2011). *The slums of Aspen : immigrants vs. the environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.

*3/7 Thursday Readings:*

- Park, L. S.-H., & Pellow, D. N. (2011). *The slums of Aspen : immigrants vs. the environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.

**Week Ten: Population and Environment Justice**

*3/12 Tuesday:*

- Park, L. S.-H., & Pellow, D. N. (2011). *The slums of Aspen : immigrants vs. the environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.
- *Finney Carolyn* "What's Race Got to Do with It: Climate Change, Privilege, and Consciousness," Whole Thinking Journal *(Owlspace)*

*3/14 Thursday* Readings: ***Group Presentation***

**Week Eleven: Environmental Inequality: Health**

*3/19 Tuesday Readings:*

- Chapter 10 and 11 in Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. *(Owlspace)*
- *Film: Blue Vinyl (Owlspace)*

*3/21 Thursday Readings*:

- Mohai, P., Pellow, D., & Roberts, J. T. (2009). Environmental justice. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources, 34*, 405–430. *(Owlspace)*
- Downey, L., & Hawkins, B. (2008). Race, income, and environmental inequality in the United States. *Sociological perspectives:*, *51*(4), 759. *(Owlspace)*

**Week Twelve: Environmental Inequality: Health**

*3/26 Tuesday Readings:* ***Group Presentation***

*3/28 Thursday: Midterm Recess*

**Week Thirteen: Nature Fights Back**

*4/2 Tuesday Readings:*

- Chapter 13 Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Population Composition, Migration and Inequality: The Influence of Demographic Changes on Disaster Risk and Vulnerability William Donner and Havidán Rodríguez *Social Forces* , Vol. 87, No. 2 (Dec., 2008), pp. 1089-1114 *(Owlspace)*

*4/4 Thursday Readings:*

- *Film: Sun Come Up (Owlspace)*

**Week Fourteen: Response to Environmental Disruptions**

4/9 Tuesday: ***Group Presentations***

4/11 Thursday *Readings***:**

- Chapters 15, 16, 17, 19 Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

**Week Fifteen:**

*4/16 Tuesday Readings:*

- *Film: The Warriors of Qiugang: A Chinese Village Fights Back (Owlspace)*
- Chapter 20 Gould, K. A., & Lewis, T. L. (2009). *Twenty lessons in environmental sociology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

*4/18 Thursday Readings:* ***Group Presentation***